

Feeding Water-Damaged Feeds

Wet feeds may produce mold spores, some of which are toxic to certain livestock. If you must feed wet or flood-damaged feed, proceed very cautiously. Watch animals carefully for any signs of illness. Mixed feeds, grains and roughages which have heated or spoiled will have little nutritive value for livestock, depending on the extent of the damage.

- Do not feed heated, badly molded or sour feeds, deteriorated cottonseed or moldy legume hays (such as alfalfa or clover) to any livestock. Any feed that is moldy-smelling is generally not good for feeding.
- Spread wet feeds out to dry as soon as possible. Dried feeds can be fed in limited amounts to beef cattle and non-lactating dairy stock.
- Use extreme caution when feeding moldy protein concentrates.
- Mix moldy feed with 90 to 95 percent sound feeds at first. Watch cattle carefully.
 - Beef cattle on full feed may go off feed.
 - Some animals may exhibit poor gains or reduced energy; young animals are more susceptible to mycotoxins than mature animals of the species.
- Some animals may develop respiratory or nervous disorders from inhaling mold spores.
- Do not feed moldy feed to horses, sheep, swine or pregnant cattle; the animals may die. Do not feed moldy feed to lactating dairy cows.
- Some diseases are spread by water.
 - Any flooded feed could be contaminated, even when dried.
 - Watch animals for signs of nervousness, listlessness, going off feed and general unthriftiness.
 - Temporarily discontinue feeding questionable ration components until a veterinarian can confirm that the feed ration isn't related to the animal's malady.
 - Contact a veterinarian if you observe any undesirable symptoms in the animals being fed salvaged feed.

Adapted from The Disaster Handbook, 1998 National Edition, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida

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